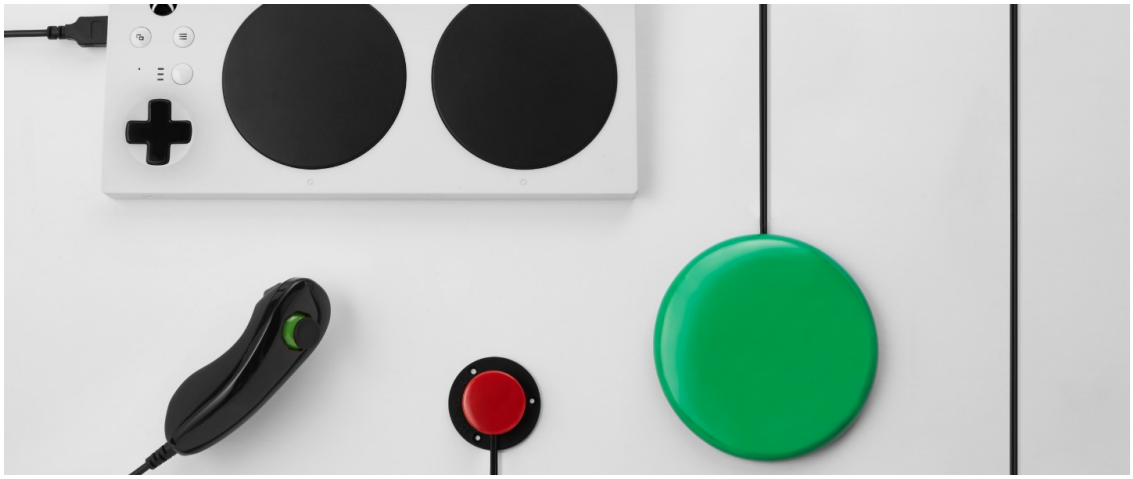

Accessible Games on Xbox Game Pass

Community NerdyBirdy Jul 15, 2022

Accessibility in gaming has come a long way in just the last several years. Features such as visual contrasts, subtitles, or even different difficulty settings have grown from accessories to industry standards. It would be unthinkable today for a contemporary game studio to craft a gaming experience without planning and accommodating for accessibility.

In honor of Disability Pride Month, we've outlined games that not only won rave reviews for their gameplay but also for taking a thoughtful and considerate approach to gaming accessibility. There are a variety of accessibility options within each game, with multiple choices for controls, visual navigation, or game difficulty.

- **Ori and the Will of the Wisps**

The long-awaited sequel to *Ori and the Blind Forest*, *Ori and the Will of the Wisps* contains several accessibility features to ensure that all gamers can take part in its dazzling graphics and gripping story.

With a dark color scheme and rigorous difficulty, *Ori and the Will of the Wisps* might seem inaccessible at first glance. But with many visual modes such as disabled motion blurs, high contrasts, and adjustable brightness, gamers can customize the visual feel to meet their needs.

Image: Xbox Game Studios

Ori and the Will of the Wisps also features multiple difficulty settings, letting users adjust the game's difficulty to align with their skill or coordination level.

- **Hades**

Universally considered one of the greatest roguelike games of all time, *Hades* is also an esteemed accomplishment in gaming accessibility. Usually featuring intricate dungeon crawls, procedurally generated levels, and the permanent death of the user's character, roguelike games are notorious for their high degree of difficulty.

Image: Supergiant Games

While *Hades* is certainly no exception regarding roguelike difficulty, the developers added several features to allow for more access to a broader audience of gamers. The most notable is “God Mode” a gameplay assist that grants the player a boost in stats after each death. God Mode allows players to still engage with the game’s difficulty while providing an outlet to prevent frustration and discouragement after multiple deaths.

- **Halo Master Chief Collection**

When Xbox’s developers crafted the *Halo Master Chief Collection*, they did more than upgrade the graphics, audio, and visual cutscenes. They also created a much more accessible gaming experience. *Halo Master Chief* offers three different subtitle options, including speech-to-text and text-to-speech.

Image: Xbox Game Studios

Players can also customize their controller experience or reconfigure it to fit their keyboard and mouse. Additional shortcuts allow for players to navigate game controls or text chats.

- **Tunic**

Universally acclaimed for its visual graphics, clever storytelling, and expansive open-world gameplay, players also noted *Tunic* for its intense difficulty and harsh learning curve. However, *Tunic* also introduced accessibility options to widen the game's audience.

Image: Finji

In addition to features that reduce controller vibrations and camera shakes, *Tunic* introduced a No Fail Mode and No Stamina Restrictions option that allows players to toggle seamlessly through different difficulty settings. Which enables players to freely enjoy *Tunic*'s complete gameplay without struggling through the game's punishing difficulty.

- **Life is Strange: True Colors**

It should probably come as no surprise that a video game built around the power and potential of empathy should have a deep commitment to gaming accessibility. For Andrew James, the Brand Manager for Life is Strange: True Colors, every aspect of the game was carefully crafted to ensure that *Life is Strange: True Colors* could reach the broadest possible audience.

Image: Square Enix

The game features three different visual modes to ensure that players with color blindness can still take part with gameplay that heavily relies on the use of color. *Life is Strange: True Colors* also introduced customizable subtitles, text sizes, and fonts to allow users to personalize their gameplay experience.

- **Sable**

Sable is an open-world exploration game with many innate features that make it an attractive option for gamers searching for more accessible experiences. There is no combat or damage in *Sable*, you can save anywhere and there’s no fail state. For instance, if you fall off a cliff, you won’t find yourself any worse off other than having to remake the climb.

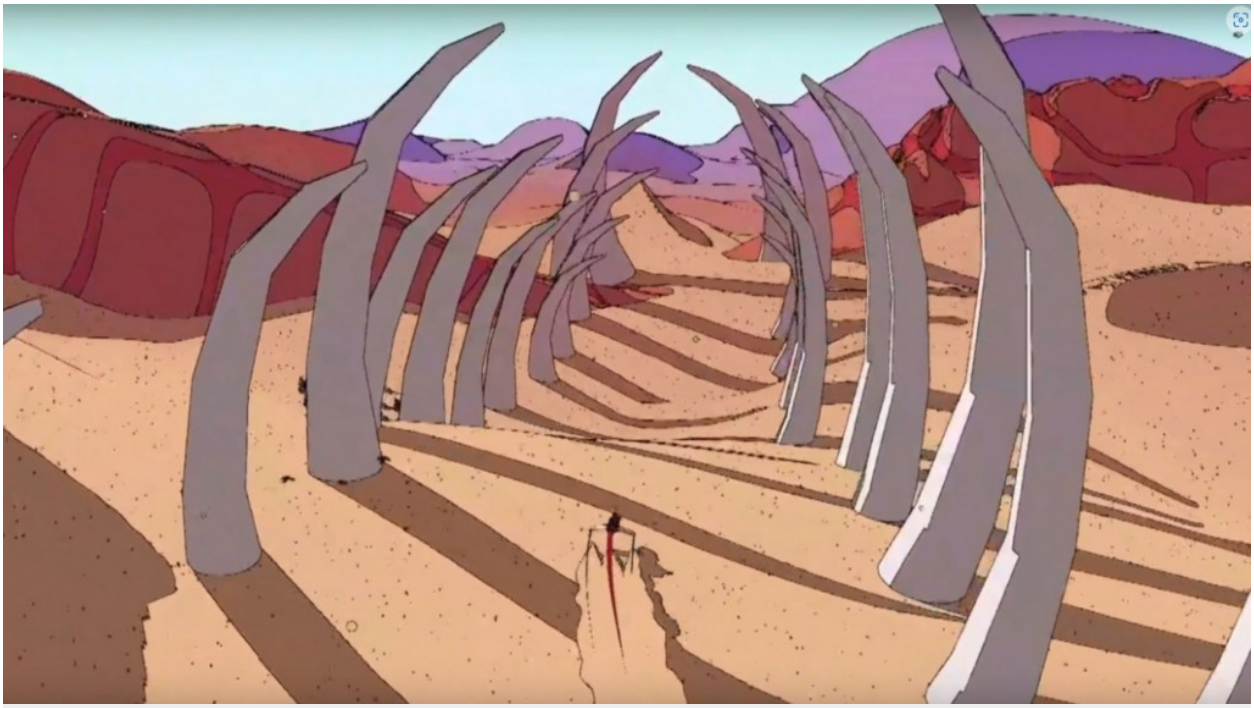

Image: Raw Fury

But *Sable* offers greater accessibility in more than just its difficulty. Visual accessibility features such as a contrast slider, disabled screen shakes, and multiple color modes help make the game accommodating to visual needs. The game also subtitles all dialogue and has a Play Without Hearing mode that removes audio cues from the game.

Gaming accessibility is more than providing necessary accommodations; it's about creating experiences that can be shared equally by all gamers. As Xbox Ambassadors, we know that when everyone can play, we all win. We're committed to ensuring that all gamers have the chance to enjoy gaming and applaud and celebrate any efforts towards making gaming more inclusive and accessible.

For more stories on gaming accessibility, learn more about how Xbox celebrates Disability Pride Month.